

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

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S/S - MR. SEBASTIAN
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R 022332Z DEC 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 293314

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EFIN, CZ

SUBJECT: CLAIMS ISSUE

1. ARMITAGE (EUR) DISCUSSED CLAIMS ISSUE WITH CZECHO-SLOVAK AMBASSADOR JOHANES NOVEMBER 30 PRIOR TO LATTER'S RETURN TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA FOR TEN DAYS CONSULTATION. JOHANES RECITED ALL ASPECTS OF CZECHOSLOVAK DISAPPOINTMENT OVER CLAIMS NEGOTIATIONS WHICH HAD PRODUCED SATISFACTORY SETTLEMENT WITH ADMINISTRATION ONLY TO BE RENDERED INOPERATIVE BY CONGRESS, REITERATED MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE INVOLVED FOR GOC AND CHARACTERIZED SCOTT PROPOSAL AS UNACCEPTABLE.

2. ARMITAGE REMINDED JOHANES THAT SCOTT HAD CHECKED CAREFULLY WITH SENATORS LONG AND GRAVEL BEFORE ADVANCING HIS UNOFFICIAL PROPOSAL AND WE UNDERSTOOD THAT HE HAD MADE CLEAR THAT LONG HAD RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTED TERMS AND WAS MOST UNLIKELY TO CONCEDE FURTHER. RECALLED THAT SCOTT HAD SAID THAT SENATOR LONG WAS PREPARED TO HAVE
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GOLD RETURNED PROMPTLY AFTER SETTLEMENT OF CLAIMS REACHED

AND WOULD TAKE CARE OF PROBLEM OF TRADE LEGISLATION ASPECT. ARMITAGE NOTED THAT IN CONTEXT OF POSSIBLE LEVELS OF FUTURE TRADE BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES THE DIFFERENCE IN TERMS OF CLAIMS SETTLEMENT WERE NOT ALL THAT SIGNIFICANT.

SUGGESTED JOHANES URGE HIS GOVERNMENT TO ADOPT PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO CLAIMS SETTLEMENT IN INTEREST OF MOVING US-CZECHOSLOVAK RELATIONS TOWARD NORMALIZATION AND NOTED DESIRABILITY OF CLEARING DECKS OF THIS ISSUE IN ORDER TO BE IN POSITION TO MOVE TOWARD TRADE AGREEMENT SHOULD CONGRESS ACT ON JACKSON-VANIK AMENDMENT. CONCLUDED THAT POSITION OF CONGRESS (LONG) CRUCIAL ON THIS ISSUE AND IT WOULD BE MISTAKE FOR GOC TO OPERATE ON ASSUMPTION THAT CHANGE IN ADMINISTRATION WOULD MATERIALLY ALTER CONGRESSIONAL POSITION.

3. HOPEFULLY, JOHANES WILL CONVEY CONTENTS OF CONVERSATION TO FONMIN CHNOUPEK AND TO SPACIL. HE DOES NOT, HOWEVER, STRIKE US AS LIKELY TO PRESS ANY VIEWPOINT WHICH MIGHT RISK BEING DISTASTEFUL TO CZECHOSLOVAK LEADERSHIP. ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CLAIMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: powellba
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE293314
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JAARMITAGE:LM
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760447-0602
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761278/aaaacpty.tel
Line Count: 82
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: powellba
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 APR 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <05 NOV 2004 by powellba>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CLAIMS ISSUE
TAGS: PFOR, EFIN, CZ, (ARMITAGE)
To: PRAGUE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006